

Oral Questions

sible for his staff, as any other Minister is, why did he not sack them? Why did he not sack them both just as he did the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, here you have a perfect example of the NDP problem.

The Hon. Member prepared his question before coming to the House. In reply to about a dozen questions, I gave some clear and precise explanations; just the same, the Hon. Member did not change his question. He read it just as it was. He had absolutely no reason to do that. I provided all the necessary information concerning the behavior of the two persons concerned, and I want to repeat it for the benefit of the Hon. Member.

[English]

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

An Hon. Member: Definitely no.

Mr. Nystrom: The Prime Minister did not answer the question. He is a phoney. He is a phoney and the people of Canada know it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Both sides. Order. Supplementary question immediately.

Mr. Nystrom: My question is a new question, Mr. Speaker, and I want the Prime Minister to answer it. The Minister of Fisheries was fired in this country because he was derelict in his duties.

Mr. Speaker: Order; no. I invited the Hon. Member to come to a question immediately; he did not. No. The Hon. Member for Montreal-Sainte Marie.

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[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY

SOCIAL PROGRAMS POLICY

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Could I ask all Hon. Members, particularly the majority, to please allow the questions and the answers to be heard.

[Translation]

Mr. Malépart: Mr. Speaker, the question I am directing to the Right Hon. Prime Minister deals with such an important issue as the income supporting policy to help families with children.

Last January, Mr. Prime Minister, your Government promised that no savings resulting from changes to the programs would be used to reduce the deficit. Could the Prime Minister

explain to us now why his Government has not kept his word and has reduced by \$15 million in 1985-86, and \$40 million in 1986-87?

[English]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member opposite will know that this matter is in debate in the House at the present time. I would also like to indicate to him that if he looks not only at the consultation paper but also at the expenditure increases for both this Department and, for that matter, the total social policy envelope, he will find that the expenditure increase is well beyond any of the figures that are now incorporated in Bill C-70.

[Translation]

REDUCTION OF FAMILY ALLOWANCES

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister.

Families in Quebec and the rest of Canada would like to know why his Government has decided to reduce in 1986 the family allowances which help middle and low income families, preferring to wait until 1987 to change—

● (1440)

[English]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, again this matter was included in the Budget. I would point out to the Hon. Member again that this is not the first time. In fact it was his Government which in 1976 fully deindexed family allowances and which did it again in 1982 with the six and five program. In fact if this had not happened, family allowances would now be substantially higher. I simply say to the Hon. Member that he should look at his own record to see why what he is saying today is quite opposite to what members of his Party said then.

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FISHERIES

SALE OF CANNED TUNA—RESPONSIBILITY FOR INFORMING PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. He has now made it clear in the House that he learned of the tuna scandal by hearing that it had been on television and on the national news. My question to the Prime Minister is very simple. Who on his staff or in his Cabinet should have been responsible for telling him about this before that date?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the responsibility is a ministerial one. The former Minister, whom Hon. Members quite properly saluted yesterday, exercised his judgment in the circumstances. He felt that he was